

Purchase and transport of Food grains.

10. **MR. K. A. MOHAMED :** Will the Government be pleased to place on the table a caste war statement of the employees of the new departments of Purchase and Transport of Food Grains and the Rationing of Food Grains ?

RAJYASEVAPRAVINA G. PARAMESWARAN PILLAI : The time and labour involved in the compilation of these statistics would be out of proportion to its utility.

Commandeering Boats.

11. **MR. K. A. MOHAMED :** Will the Government be pleased to state :

(a) when the boats are commandeered whether they give any special marks to them to distinguish them from those that are not commandeered ;

(b) whether the public are informed of the same ; and

(c) whether they are aware that merchants and businessmen are put to very great loss and delay when they load their goods in commandeered boats being not able to distinguish the commandeered boats from those not commandeered ?

RAJYASEVAPRAVINA G. PARAMESWARAN PILLAI : (a) Commandeered vallums are painted with distinguishing marks. The work of painting is in progress and has not been completed.

(b) The public could very well see the marks.

(c) No. Merchants and businessmen should not load cargo in commandeered boats without permission. Whether a vallum has been commandeered or not can be ascertained also from the lists kept in the Depot Offices and Canal Offices.

RULING RE: ABSENCE OF MEMBERS DURING POLL.

PRESIDENT : Order, order. Two points arose out of yesterday's proceedings. One was with reference to the polls. As there is a large number of new members, I might state that so long as voting on any demand is taking place, nobody should enter or leave the House. Before a poll is called for, there is no restriction on the ingress or egress of the members, but when a poll is being taken, they must either be in or out, and only those persons who are present will be counted.

The next point arises out of a question put by Mr. M. R. Ramakrishna Pillai with regard to the publication of one of his speeches. Does the honourable member wish to say anything on the matter ? We are now ready.

RULING RE: PRESS REPORTING.

MR. M. R. RAMAKRISHNA PILLAI (*Chirayinkil cum Nedumangad*) : It is a matter of general interest and I want to raise the point as one affecting the Press as a whole.

PRESIDENT : Have you seen the latest issue of the paper which has published a correction ?

MR. M. R. RAMAKRISHNA PILLAI: I saw it, Sir. But that has made matters worse.

I think that the Press has got the responsibility to see that the proceedings of the Legislature appear in extenso, or if they abridge, they do so at their own responsibility or risk. In England, you may be aware, Sir.....

PRESIDENT: I am making a ruling in the matter.

MR. M. R. RAMAKRISHNA PILLAI: Then I do not want to pursue it.

PRESIDENT: No, no. By all means you can complete your speech.

MR. M. R. RAMAKRISHNA PILLAI: In England, Press reporters are not allowed to be present in the Houses of Parliament, and even if they are so allowed, it is only as sufferance and a matter of privilege. If a member of the House of Commons or the House of Lords demands that the Press should be cleared out, it can be done. I do not know whether it is a right or a privilege in this House. But, at any rate, we members have a right to demand that our speeches, if published, should be correct.

PRESIDENT: Order, order. The strict parliamentary rule is that no parliamentary proceedings should be reported and reporters of the Press are allowed to be present only as a matter of grace and concession. And what is more, no member can get his speech reported in the papers. The right of freedom of speech immediately drops when a member communicates his speech to the Press. If the speech is libellous, people are entitled to proceed against him for libel, notwithstanding that he delivered it at a place where exemption was made. There are very strict rules due to the power of the English Parliament as a sovereign court as well as a sovereign legislature. All those rules have not been adopted in *extenso* in this country. These Houses of Legislature are in no way sovereign either as a court or as a legislature. But it is a clear and undoubted rule that the reporters to the various newspapers are here as a matter of privilege and not as of right. At any stage, it is open either to the President or the Honourable House to say that the reporters should cease to attend. From that it follows that the privilege of the reporters is one which can be curtailed or regulated. It is, of course, nobody's idea to curtail these privileges, if the reports are made on the basis that the reports should either be verbatim or absolutely correct, substantial compendia of the speeches. If the reports are verbatim there is not much risk on the reporter, although it may not always be to the advantage of some honourable member to have them reported verbatim, because some people make statements which they later on rather regret having made. But if the reporter wants to condense it, then he must do so at his peril. He must be careful in seeing that all the original points are brought into the summary. And that is a matter which is largely guided by the traditions of the Press, and generally speaking, the Press have exercised their privileges satisfactorily,

If honourable members wish, at any time, to bring to the notice of the Chair, any infraction of the rule or any curtailment of these privileges, they are at liberty to place a statement before the Secretary. The penalty in the Parliament is of course, very serious, but the only penalty that can be inflicted here is to ask the reporter not to attend as a reporter. He can, of course, be in the Visitors' Gallery. I am told just now there has been another report incorrectly made. If the honourable member concerned brings forward the matter, it will be considered.

DEMANDS FOR GRANTS.—(contd.)

DEMAND X—LAND REVENUE AND TAXES ON INCOME—(contd.)

MR. K. R. NARAYANAN (*Nominated*): I beg leave to move motion No. 19.

Motion No. 19.

MR. K. R. NARAYANAN: സർ, ഞാൻ ഈ ഉപക്ഷേപം ഇവിടെ ചോദ്യമാക്കിക്കൊള്ളുന്നു.

"To reduce the total allotment of Rs. 18 02,106 for Land Revenue by Re. 1."

To discuss the necessity for taking steps in order to resume land given on registry if it is left uncultivated for 3 years consecutively and to give that land on lease for specific periods to landless persons or persons who own very little land."

PRESIDENT: Order, order. Evidently the honourable member is not aware of what has already been done by the Government in this matter. In order to refresh his memory and in order to indicate what the Government propose to do in the matter, the Chief Secretary will make a statement.

RAJYASEVAPRAVINA G. PARAMESVARAN PILLAI: The object of motion No. 19 moved by Mr. K. R. Narayanan is as follows:

To discuss the necessity for taking steps in order to resume land given on registry if it is left uncultivated for three years consecutively and to give that land on lease for specific periods to landless persons or persons who own very little land.

It is the declared policy of Government that assignments of lands in future would be subject to resumption in the event of no cultivation being started within six months of the date of assignment. The lands will also be subject to periodical inspection by the Land Revenue authorities in order to ascertain the nature and extent of the cultivation effected. Where anti-erosion measures and terrace cultivation are considered to be in the best interests of agricultural operations in particular areas, Government will insist upon these being done. And in appropriate cases where important pioneering work is requisite, Government will render the necessary facilities also. The question, however, may be a little more difficult and complicated in the case of lands which are already at the absolute disposal of registry holders. Even in such cases, Government intend to take the necessary powers and enact measures in order to bring under cultivation compulsorily large areas of uncultivated lands. Provision has already been made in the Defence of Travancore Rules under which Government may,